SYRIAC CHANT AS MUSIC IN CULTURE: A NEW APPROACH*

TALA JARJOUR
YALE INSTITUTE OF SACRED MUSIC

This article stems from a combination of admiration and dissatisfaction relating to the study of what some sources call 'Syriac music', others 'Syriac chant', or a variety of names involving the liturgical and musical aspects of Syriac Christianity.[1] Despite appearing deceivingly simple, Syriac chant has been a remarkably impenetrable musicological enterprise.[2] For musicologists who desire to connect the literature on the subject with the sounds they hear in church, the more one tries to understand this musical conundrum, the more fascinated one becomes with it as a dynamic, living musical tradition, but the more dissatisfying existing scholarship on the subject becomes. Being neither the first nor the only musician to find European musicological scholarship on the subject lacking in local representational value, I hope in this article to raise the issue within Syriac studies. The aim is to suggest new directions for studying Syriac chant that may be more connected to the tradition and its norms than they may be concerned with conforming to European musicological paradigms. The interdisciplinary alternative the argument proposes to existing musicological scholarship is directly informed by the chant's particular context, and will hopefully find resonance among liturgically and musically minded readers within the field of Syriac studies.

To put it in disciplinary terms, having attempted to study Syriac chant as a musicologist (i.e. using the intellectual tools of 'Western', historical musicology), I have concluded that, before we can achieve any realistically descriptive approximation of this complex musical enterprise we commonly call Syriac chant, we need to rethink our hermeneutical toolkit. While 'we' here includes, for the most part, those academics among us who have not been raised in the Suryani church but who are attempting to understand how this music works, it also includes Suryani men and women who are increasingly taking one of their most intimate cultural properties, their music, into the sanctuary of the academe, or more precisely, into Western academe.[3]

What I would like to have achieved by the end of this short article, then, is a form of intellectual stimulation. Without setting out to disqualify some two-hundred years of musicological scholarship, I would like to analyze – in scholarly terms, of course – my passionate dissatisfaction with, or perhaps my dissatisfied admiration of, available knowledge on Syriac chant and how its

music continues to be studied. I do so in the hope that in addressing a specialized audience for all things Syriac, such as the readership of *The Journal for the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies*, the quest to understand Syriac chant in ways different from those of traditional scholarship may gain currency, and that a contextual conversation may begin.

There are a number of ways in which to present the argument in musical-theoretical terms, and they involve much technical language appropriate for specialized musicological platforms. Therefore, rather than addressing questions of modal theory, problems of intervallic inconsistencies, and notoriously bottomless arguments concerning musical-theoretical details of Syriac (or neighbouring) types of modality (such as those in Arab and Turkish musics), the strategy for the purposes of this article is to demonstrate the centrality of other elements of Suryani musicality to the process of theorization. Scholars in music studies may like to speak about 'the music itself', but they also acknowledge the existence of a varied array of formative elements in any musical process. What may be conceived as extra-musical elements, are aspects of Suryani life and culture which are formative to the musical enterprise and central to understanding the essence of singing in the Suryani church. This choice belongs to an intellectual stance that perceives music as a cultural construct, and pursues a local hermeneutics in order to understand the local musical enterprise.[4]

MUSIC BOOKS AS BOOKS ABOUT MUSIC

Besides early Syriac sources, namely Barhebraeus's *Ethicon*, the earliest printed accounts on Syriac chant came from Europe and were written by French scholars. I will touch on two, the first of which was printed in Paris at the start of the nineteenth century, and the second had to wait until after the First World War to be printed in Beirut. Central to both books are musical transcriptions, which the authors tell us they made of chants that local cantors sang for them. Although the former publication, an example of early-nineteenth-century scholarship on Syriac chant, displays problems common to early musicology, which subsequently have been largely addressed, it shares basic commonalities with the latter source. Those commonalities will be discussed in what follows to demonstrate the need for an altogether radically different approach to the subject. What is worth noting at this point is that the methodical issues those two sources display were not exclusive to them, nor to French musicology on Syriac chant. The problems that will be discussed below (or variations of them) apply to most published works on the subject, including some that have started to be produced by Suryani musicians from the Middle East since the second half of the twentieth century.

The earliest work we have from Europe on Syriac chant is Book 14 in *Description de l'Egypte* which Napoleon Bonaparte commissioned in preparation for his military campaign in Egypt. Guillaume-André Villoteau (1759-1839), a tenor who studied oriental languages at the Sorbonne and became a leader of the Opéra chorus after the Revolution, wrote the section on music. He reported on the music of the Syriac people (or 'nation' as he put it), the Armenians, the Copts, and the Jews, which he considered to be the minorities of the era. Beside the fact that Villoteau's scholarship was not admired for long,[5] his account of Syriac music displays a number of errors, some of which have not left the musicological canon. A full explanation of the problems in Villoteau's work falls beyond the scope of this article; suffice to say that the obscurity of his sources, the lack of key information and some basic linguistic misunderstand-

ings have led to an imagined binary system that was far from being accurate or adequately described.[6]

Fortunately, subsequent musicology was better informed on matters historical and textual. Later musicologists who went to Lebanon to study chant worked closely with philologists and local clergy, which allowed them to correct Villoteau's misunderstanding and offer an account that displayed greater accuracy, particularly on the linguistic aspect of poetry and meter. The result was the second publication on Syriac chant in French, a two-volume study that has been reprinted twice since its first issue in Beirut.[7] The 1925 publication was a collaborative effort mostly between two Benedictine monks, Jules Cécilien Jeannin (1866-1933) and Julien Puyade (1882-1914). *Mélodies Liturgiques Syriennes et Chaldéennes* came out in two volumes: the first was a liturgical introduction, *Introduction Liturgique*, and the second, *Introduction Musicale*, was a musical study that included transcriptions of over 900 pieces, most of them Bēt-Gāzō chants.[8]

There are a number of reasons for selecting these two sources as examples to discuss here. I will mention the following four, the relevance of which will emerge as the article progresses. First, both French scholars belonged to a European tradition in which historical-musicological encounters with the Levant were not rare but were considered. Second, French colonial interest in the region was growing throughout the nineteenth century and took the form of direct and military control at the turn of the twentieth century. Third, the Benedictine monks lived in Lebanon when they worked on their collection and were thus in direct contact with the Suryani people, which enhances the relevance of the next reason. Fourth, the work of French musicologists was, and remains, accessible in these francophone lands; and Jeannin's in particular is well known among Suryani musicologists. Another point worth making here is that a number of German musicologists have also written on Syriac chant later in the twentieth century, and, like their French counterparts, they too have relied heavily on musical transcriptions. However, if it exists, the influence of German scholarship is more difficult to ascertain in local circles, partly because of the lack of contact with Eastern churches in the area, but mostly because it is generally difficult to access in the francophone (and increasingly Anglophone) region.

While residing in the monastery of Charfé, Jeannin encountered many Suryani priests and monks whose singing he used to create his transcriptions, and whom he hoped might subsequently benefit from his book in terms of their learning and instruction. Interestingly, and even though his project was generously endowed by various sources at the time of publication,[9] Jeannin did not make use of the recording technology which, at the time, would have been commercially available in the form of the early phonograph. One cannot help wondering what a treasured source it could have been, had Jeannin deposited a few wax cylinders with the monks in Charfé. But he did not. Accordingly, we have a collection of transcriptions that we know was made thanks to a number of monks and chant students from the Catholic seminary at the monastery, but we have very little else to suggest anything about the sounds of these chants. We do know, however, that most of the cantors were pupils of the Patriarch Georges Shelhod, who had some years earlier established a reputation as a knowledgeable chant teacher at the seminary.[10] But besides this information, we must deduce the rest to discover at least from which regional schools the cantors came.[11] Given the variety of places in which Jeannin tells us Shelhod learned the chant, his influences are likely to have been mixed, which creates some confusion, giv-

en the significance of regional variety for chant experts. But this was not the only aspect in which Jeannin's account might not prove helpful to the modern-day reader.

I had seen Jeannin's book briefly on a visit with Bishop Youhanna Ibrahim in Aleppo in the early 2000s. But since the Aleppo edition had gone out of print, I searched for the book in libraries, and found it in a special collection in the Music Room at the Cambridge University Library. Holding the 1925 book like an historic artifact, I asked the librarian who delivered it on special request whether I should sit in a particular place to read it. He said, 'No. You can even take it home if you want' (the only thing that was needed was for an adhesive piece of paper to be fixed inside the book cover where a member of staff at the issue desk would stamp the due date). Acquired in 1926 and 1928, as the Library stamps indicated, Jeannin's heavy volumes had first been checked out some eight decades after publication. So far as my research has yielded, the transcriptions are not in use for chant instruction in Charfé or elsewhere in the Syrian Catholic church, and I have not observed them being used in the Syrian Orthodox or the Maronite contexts.[12] On the contrary, clerics and musicians who seem to know the book have found the musical transcriptions, as I have, of little representational value. In his book on Syriac music Ibrahim quotes Archdeacon Niʻmatallah Danno criticizing them as "regrettably ill and rude."[13]

A PROBLEM OF TEXTUALITY

Scholarship on Syriac chant continues to rely, just as Villoteau's and Jeannin's work did, on the meticulous production and intensive study of musical scores.[14] In this process, musicologists write the chants down, and then they study them. In other words, scholars study what they have written, which means, given the complex nature of musical transcription and notation systems for microtonal types of music, that the musicologists effectively study the music they themselves write. As this is a musical tradition that has no known form of transcription into musical text, then any system of notation that does not emanate from it, and has not withstood the test of time and the trial of practice, will fall short of representing it fully. Therefore, creating a system that is based on a given set of transcriptions is necessarily confined to the limitations of these transcriptions and dictated by the choices their creators made in the process. For this reason, it is logical, and even natural, that all studies based on musical transcription display limitations, comprehensive and impressive as those studies may be (and normally are).[15]

In producing a written version of a large body of musical pieces which have been passed down from generation to generation via oral transmission (such as those the texts for which are found in the Bēt-Gāzō), scholarship that relies on transcription is attempting to turn this aural musical culture into musical text. Considering that Western scholarship has traditionally given primacy to the visual, exemplified by text as a sign of literacy and civilized knowledge, then the production of these musical texts is a form of cultural translation, or interpretation, which subscribes to the conception of culture as text.[16] Here, I would take Geertz's concept further and suggest that transcribing Syriac chant involves a form of cultural transformation.[17] Turning the sounds into symbols on paper emphasizes the visual at the expense of the aural, which is a dramatic alteration in this case, given the predominance of aurality as the primary mode of operation in the Syriac musical context. The fact that those texts have not gained practical currency in Suryani circles, even when they have been produced by local experts (e.g. Nouri Iskandar's two versions of the Bēt-Gāzō), is

highly indicative and must be borne in mind when studying this oral/aural musical culture.

Another level of complication is the persistent idea of a musical system.[18] Apart from Barhebraeus's instruction concerning good singing in the *Ethicon*, we have no written record in the west Syriac tradition containing musical instruction before the twentieth century (to my knowledge). Even Barhebraeus, be it by choice or for some other reason history may continue to conceal, makes no reference to the modal nature of church music in the sense of intervallic and scalar description. Most studies since, however, have either suggested a musical-theoretical system or employed neighbouring systems to describe a sample of melodies, and in many cases, have devised a composite system combining the two.[19] This analytical strategy has been problematic on many levels, but to adhere to the non-technical-musical aspects of this argument, I would mention cultural attribution as a case in point. I mentioned above that Villoteau came up with a binary system of categories for Syriac chant. In explaining his prescribed categories, he attributed them to Greece and Arabia, favouring the former, which, according to his view, was more refined and sophisticated compared to the rude character of the latter. Such speculative cultural attributions not only engender problematic conclusions, they also exemplify a teleological approach to the question of musical systems. While Villoteau's is one, admittedly crude, example, the Imperial envoy's system was not the only instance of teleological systematizations.

While decidedly not involving technical musical-theoretical detail in this article, reference must be made to one musical-theoretical concept briefly before moving on to the next point. The treatment of Syriac chant, particularly the problematic question of Syriac modality, in the earliest European musicological studies, reveals issues of approach which relate to Orientalist musicology. Without discussing the issue of modality here, the discussion must touch on the question of Orientalism. As the eighteenth century dawned, European modernism and positivism looked eastwards in search of new material for knowledge. The hierarchies of power and knowledge in place at the time were not considered as the new intellectual approaches developed, but would emerge later as elements of colonialist and Orientalist discourses. The following section will discuss some implications of Orientalism in French musicology for Syriac chant (which by no means represents a comprehensive discussion of the issue or the literature).

FRENCH ORIENTALIST MUSICOLOGY AND SYRIAC CHANT

French Orientalism is closely affiliated to French colonialism: both appeared as consequents of modernist France. Following the Enlightenment, France perceived herself as the leader of modernity and the epitome of civility.[20] French musicology, and particularly Orientalist musicology were no exception; to a large extent, musicology and its treatment of the Orient in France escaped fundamental challenges until very recently. Accordingly, the work of the musicologists who wrote on Syriac chant reflects many aspects of their training, which can be traced to the conception of French musicology as a product of the Enlightenment. The rationalism that emerged in Enlightenment France produced new traditions in the study of music, which were particularly evident in the production of encyclopaedias and dictionaries.[21] Equally significant were the aesthetic writings that considered music as an imitation of nature. During that period, a Benedictine monk, Philippe-Joseph Caffiaux produced in 1756 a seven-volume system-

atic history of music from pre-historic to contemporary times.[22] The Benedictine monks in the present article were certainly aware of Caffiaux's work, as they were of that of their encyclopedic and aesthete predecessors.[23]

By the end of the eighteenth century, modernist methods started in historical musical writings along with an interest in antiquity and the East.[24] In the first half of the nineteenth century, François-Joseph Fétis (1784-1871) competed for the European centre-stage with Raphael Kiesewetter, who had written the first and most comprehensive work on Arab music to date.[25] Despite Fétis's prominence, other musicologists, such as Adrien de La Fage (1805-1862), succeeded in drawing attention to ancient and oriental musical practices.[26] La Fage's focus on plainchant and the music of the Near East underlined the contemporary French interest in church music performance and chant, and established a tradition for these fields.[27] The musicologists whose work is mentioned here belonged to this scholarly climate: it situated the methodologies and contextualized the anthological nature of their work within an intellectual environment that sought encyclopaedic knowledge by various means, one of which involved looking to the East in search of information on the past. Additionally, most of the leading 'musicologists' until to the latter half of the nineteenth century were amateurs who earned their living as doctors, lawyers or civil servants.[28] This was another circumstance shared by the musicologists mentioned in the current article who were priests, teachers, and, as in the case of Julien Puyade, army officers.[29]

Evoking Orientalism calls for a brief note on Edward Said's theory[30] and two of its implications in the Suryani context, which are interconnected. One implication relates to the matter of textuality. Said writes: "It seems a common human failing to prefer the schematic authority of a text to the disorientations of direct encounters with the human."[31] His disappointment with human nature may be justified in view of the textual orientation of European musicological analysis. However, there is more to this point, to which I will return in a moment. Another implication of Said's theory is the notion that local knowledge becomes determined by what the Orientalists prescribe. This notion applies in the sense that local scholars have indeed followed in the footsteps of their European predecessors (albeit with various degrees of strictness), despite the fact that they faced problems – even deadlocks – comparable to those the Western pioneers had encountered. On the other hand, what renders this notion limited in relation to Suryani chant is the fact that knowledge wrought by the European authors has found little currency with Suryani priests and cantors. The problem of accessibility, mentioned above, applies even in the French case as the writings remain in French and therefore are only accessible to the French-educated minority of Suryanis. What is more, even in cases where Suryani experts on chant gained access to European material, they did not make use of it in their practice and even criticized it at times as I also mentioned earlier. What was interesting as far as my observations recorded, however, is that 'Orientalists' continue to be a welcome presence in modern Suryani circles where the term has not been tainted by postcolonial theory; I cite the words of a Suryani scholar and community member as a case in point. In a personal conversation in Aleppo (2006), the late senior deacon Abrohom Nouro praised the work of Sebastian Brock in furthering Syriac scholarship, describing him, both in French and in Arabic, as *Orientaliste* and *mustashriq* (respectively). The human failing Said notes, then, becomes less universal when the scholar's efforts make an impact on the communities whose traditions

they study (textually or otherwise). The deeply impactful scholarship of Sebastian Brock (to continue to use Deacon Nouro's example) on the living traditions of the Syriac church was not only based on its academic and scholarly merits, but also on its recognition of the living and breathing nature of this textual material and of the people who carry it through continuous practice.

Without attempting diachronic cross-disciplinary comparisons, my aim here is to highlight finer nuance in the dynamics of textualizing orality with respect to the authority of music knowledge in the chant tradition. Non-deferential as it may be to the perceived authority of nineteenth- and twentieth-century European musicology on Syriac chant, this brief survey of two sources and their intellectual environment does not constitute a post-colonial critique of European musicology on Syriac chant either. The intent behind this argument, rather, is to convey a sense of context, which highlights a certain focus present in these studies on things that mattered to their scholarly discourses. A lack of focus is also revealed on things which matter to the Suryani people, those whose music has been the subject of study. No regular reader of this Journal needs reminders of what the Suryani people have endured during the decade or two either side of 1900. The musicologists themselves suffered too as they lost an essential member of their linguistic team in battle as the First World War broke out, so Jeannin tells us in the opening pages of the book. Yet, they make no mention of the traumatic events that those Suryanis whose oral tradition they were turning into written text were enduring, or of the fact that contemporaneous with the development of their musicological work, the Suryani existence was receiving such violent blows that shook its core and changed its history dramatically. It is in this sense that the imbalance of power, or to use a theoretical concept, the question of hegemony, is most evident. It appeared in the musical product just as it did in the international relations between the peoples involved. Examining the intellectual premises of these studies, and those of the methodological trends they established in studying the Suryani sonorities, is therefore necessary before new directions may be suggested.

A RADICALLY DIFFERENT APPROACH

The new approach this article suggests to Syriac chant would be to follow in the footsteps of Allan Merriam (1923-1980), a leading ethnomusicologist, whose approach to studying music with the help of anthropological methods was foundational in terms of what many scholars concerned with music do today. Merriam is best known for his book *The Anthropology of Music*,[32] in which he issued an invitation to approach all kinds of musics in all parts of the world by attempting to approximate local musics as accurately as possible within their respective contexts. In doing so, Merriam was building on the work of previous scholars, most significantly that of Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942), one of the most influential social anthropologists in the field, whose work is largely considered to be foundational to ethnographic research as we know it. As his thought developed during the latter half of the twentieth century, Merriam proposed that a fruitful approach to the study of music, be it (i.e. the music) Western or otherwise, would be concerned with studying 'music in culture'. Soon after, he modified this seminal proposition to 'the study of music as culture'. Those six words continue to serve as the least problematic explanation of the ever-evolving and fundamentally interdisciplinary field of ethnomusicology, a field that has evolved immensely since

the time of Merriam. But what else makes ethnomusicology relevant to Syriac chant?

Like its sister subfield of musicology, both of which fall under the larger disciplinary umbrella of 'the study of music,'[33] ethnomusicology is frequently associated with non-Western cultures. While 'ethnomusicology' (an evolution from its hyphenated predecessor 'ethno-musicology') became recognized within the wider field in the 1950s, studying music in relation to culture was by no means a new invention at that point, nor was the consideration of culture restricted to non-Western contexts.[34] However, what ethnomusicologists have been keen to explore is the multitude of ways in which studying – and understanding – how any type of music interacts with the culture to which it belongs might develop. This, as many ethnomusicologists would stress, is best done through immersing themselves in the culture, in the same way that anthropologists do when they conduct ethnographic research. Accordingly, in the process of writing ethnographies about music, many ethnomusicologists would consider fieldwork to be one of the main features that distinguishes ethnomusicological research from its musicological counterpart. They understand fieldwork as a form of active immersion in, and daily involvement with, the lives and the musical practices (i.e. the culture) of the people whose music they want to study.

Constraints on scope do not allow the current discussion to demonstrate *how* ethnomusicological methods might be more fruitful, but having shown some of the limitations of traditional musicological methods, I will propose *why* an ethnomusicological perspective might be more appropriate for an aural tradition such as Syriac chant. One thing I have noticed in my attempt to try to make sense of existing literature in relation to what I was hearing in church as a musician and researcher, is that the former, no matter how large a sample it transcribes or how precise an analysis it produces, does not convey a real representation of the latter. What is more, the musical sounds of Syriac chant do not lend themselves to anatomical intervallic analyses, such as those traditional studies attempt. Chanting in the Suryani church is not a thing; it is something that happens. Syriac chant is not (only) a set of books, it is an occurrence in time and place; it is carried out by people with faith, experience, and active musical participation. Syriac chant is a musical event that people realize within a complex spiritual experience, which carries a great deal of historical significance. Accordingly, a fundamental methodological notion here would be the difference between music as object (score, recording, musical work, instrument, musical system) and music as process: in worship, as event; in communal participation, as social act; in dissemination through memory, as a dynamic and living musical enterprise; and in execution as deep and shared experience. Music here should be seen as an aspect of human life, which has a strongly reciprocal relationship with all aspects of social life: it is an expression of a people's understanding of life, one that is continuously affected and changed by many things which make a people who they are, including history with its dramatic turns and steep valleys.[35] This is why the word 'culture' is strongly pertinent, ineffable as it may be.

In showing some limitations of a discourse based on the musical object, this article has submitted the necessity for a discourse grounded in the sonorities and accounting for their organic relationship with the living culture of this rich and complex tradition. It has made a case for considering a radically new approach to Syriac chant, which, approximately 200 years after the first European study appeared in print, invites a new consideration of Syriac chant as a living enterprise of

negotiable premises. This approach seeks a thick description of the music as part of that 'complex whole' known as culture, and considers it within its own history and set of complexities.[36] This is a deferential scholarly approach that aims to share the power of knowledge with those who originally possess it, an outlook that stands to be corrected and revised in its pursuit of knowledge and understanding, and affords to ask, and to be asked, all the culturally-specific questions.

NOTES

* Tala Jarjour is a music scholar who specializes in music and religion, and whose current work focuses on music in and from the Middle East. She is currently Visiting Fellow at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. Her forthcoming book, titled *Sense and Sadness: Syriac Chant in Aleppo*, will be published by Oxford University Press in 2018.

[1] I prefer 'Syriac chant' for its simplicity and clarity: it consists of two uncontested terms. But I also use on occasion 'chanting in the Suryani church' for reasons that will become apparent at the end of this article.

[2] An earlier version of this article was presented as a paper, under the same title, at the Sixth North American Syriac Symposium "Syriac Encounters" at Duke University (26-29 June 2011). A previously published article shares some points with the current article; see Tala Jarjour "Syriac Chant at the Negotiation of Source and Method in the Two Music-'ologies'," *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 47 (2015) 45-63. Due recognition for that publication may be in order.

[3] The term 'Suryani' is the Arabic attributive denoting that which belongs to the Syriac language and liturgy. It is the most common appellation by which members of this church are known as a people in modern-day Syria (and much of its diaspora); the community uses this term when referring to itself and in reference to the church, language, and culture. As most of my research has taken place within this community, I prefer this local appellation. This choice also has the purpose of avoiding name complications, although by no means does it exclude those who prefer other terms (e.g. Assyrian, Aramean).

[4] On local hermeneutics, see G. Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Toward a Historiography of Others* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

[5] J. Mongrédien and K. Ellis, "Villoteau, Guillaume André," in *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online* (2008): http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/29399.

[6] For more see Jarjour "Syriac Chant..."

[7] Subsequent prints came out of Dār-Mārdīn, Aleppo in 1994, and Gorgias Press, New Jersey in 2009.

[8] The original edition does not show a publication date. Vol. 1 shows that the *Nihil obstat* was given in 1923, and the Catholic *Imprimatur* in 1924. Given the date of the book review by Gastoué in 1926, the date of the Cambridge University Library acquisition on the 1st September of the same year, and the time needed for transition between Europe and Beirut and the printing process, a publication date in 1925 is a plausible estimate for the first volume. The second volume might have appeared later as it was acquired by the Library in 1928.

[9] A. Gastoué, "Mélodies Liturgiques Syriennes et Chaldéennes by Dom Jeannin," *Revue de Musicologies* 7:18 (1926) 95-98.

[10] Shelhod was Patriarch from 1874 until his death in 1891, see J. C. Jeannin, *Mélodies Liturgiques Syriennes et Chaldéennes*. Vols 1,2 (Paris: Leroux, 1925).

[11] Ibrahim and Kiraz suggest the existence of six regional schools in the west Syriac tradition; G. Y., Ibrahim and G. Kiraz "Ephrem's *Madroshe* and the Syrian Orthodox *Bēt-Gāzō*: A Loose, But Fascinating, Affinity," *Hugoye* 2:1 (1999).

[12] I have been told recently that one Catholic priest in Iraq uses them to accompany church singing on the piano. Unfortunately I do not have the name of the said priest or his whereabouts.

[13] G. Y. Ibrahim, *Syriac Music* (Aleppo: Dār-Mardīn, 2003; in Arabic *al-Mūsīqā al-Suryāniyya*), p. 59.

[14] H. Husmann and P. Jeffery, "Syrian church music," in *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online* (2008): http://www. oxfordmusiconline. com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27274; L. Hage, *Recueil de Chants Syro-Maronites* (Kaslik, Liban: Université Saint-Esprit de Kaslik, 2001); N. Iskandar, in Ibrahim, *Syriac Music*; E. Kisrouani, *Le Bet-Gazo (Thesaurus) et L'Octoïchos Dans la Liturgie de L'Eglise Sévérienne* (Paris IV: Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1989; unpublished), G. As'ad, *Syrian Music across History* (Qāmish-

lī, 1990; in Arabic *al-Mūsīqā al-Sūriyya ʻibr al-Tārīkh*).

[15] For more on textuality in the context of Syriac chant see Tala Jarjour, "Texting Musicality, Writing Sound," *Cambridge Literary Review* 6(10) (2017) 165-172.

[16] C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

[17] Owing to the limited scope and the expressed purpose of this article, it does not problematize the concept of culture nor does it engage analytically with critical literature on the subject (such as the work of Clifford Geertz, James Clifford, and others does), which nonetheless does not suggest that it employs the concept of culture simplistically.

[18] All accounts, including Villoteau's, which comprised 16 notated pieces, suggest a musical system that governs the chant.

[19] In the case of Husmann, his system was predominantly borrowed from Gregorian chant, with some references to Middle-Eastern modality (see the New Grove entry on the subject revised by Husmann and Jeffery. "Syrian church music."); in the case of Iskandar, it was Arab and Turkish modal theory based on their various conventions concerning the measurement of the divisions of the tone, and in the case of Asʻad, it was reconstructed ancient Mesopotamian scales.

[20] J. Pasler, "Race, Orientalism, and distinction in the wake of the 'Yellow Peril'," *Western Music and its Others:Difference, Representation and Appropriation in Music*, ed. G. Born and D. Hesmondhalgh (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), p. 86-118. This view was challenged throughout modernity, particularly in the wake of the cholera pandemic in 1832; P. Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1989).

[21] Most remarkable is the famous eighteenth-century great *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and D'Alembert, which included entries on music.

[22] Dates, names and historical facts on French musicology are found in J. Gribenski, "France," in Vincent Duckles *et al.*, "Musicology," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online* (2008) http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/46710pg3.

[23] While Caffiaux's history was never published, it is considered the second largest historical work in France.

[24] Such as François-Louis Perne (1772-1832) on antiquity. Most famous with regard to the East is the work of André Villoteau, mentioned earlier in this article, whom Napoleon Bonaparte selected as a member of a scientific commission, and who wrote a volume on Arab music.

[25] P. V. Bohlman, "R. G. Kiesewetter's Die Musik Der Araber: A Pioneering Ethnomusicological Study of Arabic Writings on Music," *Asian Music* 19:1 (1987) 164-96.

[26] This was particularly the case in La Fage's collaboration with his teacher Choron, the prominent post-Revolution musicologist (1771-1834), on the master's *Nouveau manuel complet de musique vocale et instrumentale* (1838-9), as well as in La Fage's own *Histoire générale de la musique et de la danse* (1844).

[27] It also encouraged the appearance of anthologies and collections of chant and early vocal music; V. Duckles, *et al.* "Musicology," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online* (2008) http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/46710pg3.

[28] Duckles *et al.*, "Musicology."

[29] French musicologists did not embark on recognisable ethnomusicological research as such until the 1950s, when musicologists began collaborating officially with the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, following the establishment of the Department of Organology at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris by André Schaeffner in 1929; Gribenski, "France.".

[30] E. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Classics, 2003).

[31] Ibid., 95.

[32] A. P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964).

[33] G. Born, "For a Relational Musicology: Music and Interdisciplinarity, Beyond the Practice Turn," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 135:2 (2007) 205-243.

[34] B. Nettl, *Nettl's Elephant: On the History of Ethnomusicology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010).

[35] For more on the ethnomusicological concept of music in social life, see T. Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

[36] Edward Burnett Tylor on culture.